

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC032315
Inspection date	15 December 2009
Inspector	Paul Taylor
Type of Inspection	Random

Date of last inspection	17 June 2009
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About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

The home provides respite care for up to five young people with learning or physical disabilities. It is a spacious, detached house with a large garden, a sensory room and a lounge and kitchen/dining area on the ground floor. Each young person has their own room with overhead hoists. The home also has a lift for ease of access to the first floor. There are two large bathrooms which are equipped to meet the needs of physically disabled young people.

Summary

At this unannounced inspection the key standards in the area of staying safe were assessed. The home continues to provide an excellent standard of care to the young people. Individual needs are assessed in a detailed and thorough manner and support given to the young people is of a very high standard. Oversight and monitoring provided by the manager and senior members of staff ensures that the commitment of the staff team continues to promote excellent practice and the young people's safety and wellbeing.

Two recommendations were made as a result of this inspection.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made for the manager to endorse risk assessments when they have been updated and reviewed. This has been achieved.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is not judged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Privacy is respected by the staff team and sensitive information is stored securely. The young people's disabilities means that most are in need of very carefully planned assistance with regards to their personal care. Detailed and thorough individual support plans outline how this is to be delivered. The plans are audited by key workers, the manager and social worker and are then endorsed by the young person's carer or parent. Support is sensitively provided to a very high standard.

Staff receive training in complaints and 'whistle blowing' as part of their induction process. Complaints are addressed promptly and the results of any complaints thoroughly recorded, including whether the complaint was founded and whether the complainant was satisfied by the outcome. The right of the young people to make complaints and to be listened to, is valued, promoted and respected. The members of staff are very aware of how each young person may communicate, whether this is verbally, by behaviour or the use of augmented communication. The staff are very alert to how each young person may show distress or displeasure even though most of the young people may not have the cognitive ability to understand the concept of what makes a formal complaint.

A robust approach toward child protection ensures that the young people's safety is promoted and seen as paramount. Staff receive training in safeguarding and clearly have a sound understanding of all key child protection matters and protocols. All policies and procedures are produced in line with current local and national safeguarding legislation and practices, being completed to a high standard. Responses to child protection concerns or incidents are swift and comprehensive with all relevant parties being informed in good time.

The staff are aware that whilst some of the young people may not understand the concept of bullying, there is a need to supervise the dynamics of the group in case behaviour is displayed which may cause alarm or distress to others. The high ratio of staff to young people, with practice being underpinned by detailed care plans, ensures that issues can be resolved promptly.

The staff team are highly sensitive to the risks to a young person should they go missing. Protocols are in place should this happen and risk assessments underline each young person's vulnerability if they are unsupervised both inside the home and in the community. A high staffing ratio combined with very good levels of awareness and alertness has ensured that no young people have gone missing from the home.

The behavioural needs of the young people living at the home are responded to in an individual, well planned and sensitive manner. All young people have individual support plans tailored to respond to their particular issues which may trigger anxiety, distress or challenging behaviour. Staff knowledge of each young person ensures that they are very well supported and re-assured when they become distressed. Advice and oversight from external specialists, such as occupational therapists, is not always in place for the staff to follow.

Sanctions can be used for those young people who understand that there can be consequences to negative behaviour. Sanctions that are to be used are outlined in each young person's individual support plan and these are agreed to by the manager, young person's social worker and parent. Where sanctions are imposed, they are clearly recorded and endorsed by the manager.

All members of staff are trained in the method of restraint used in the home. A record is kept of all incidents requiring physical intervention. Details included in the restraint log are not always as clear as the details contained in the separate incident report completed by the members of staff.

Risk assessments are made with regards to the premises and activities in which the young people partake. They are regularly reviewed and updated. Additionally, individual risk assessments are completed on the young people with regards to their behaviour and extreme vulnerability in certain situations, such as going missing, bathing, or travelling in cars with members of staff.

Regular checks of the premises and safety equipment, such as fire alarms, are carried out. External professionals also underpin these checks with their own checks and tests. Fire drills occur on a regular basis. Each young person has a personal emergency evacuation plan which outlines the support they need in the event of a fire or emergency.

The organisation has a thorough recruitment process which ensures that any prospective member of staff does not start work until all necessary checks have been completed.

The systems operated by the home and the alertness and commitment of the staff team ensures that the young people's safety and wellbeing is protected and promoted to a very high standard.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is not judged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is not judged.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is not judged.

Organisation

The organisation is not judged.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, The Childrens Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the details in incident reports relating to physical restraint are also included in the restraint log. (NMS 22)
- ensure that advice from external specialists is available when planning a young person's individual support plan. (NMS 22)